

Vol. 35, Issue 12

March 13, 2008

(Excerpt from the *ERS e-Bulletin*, provided by ERS for use by ERS Subscriber.)

Technology in Schools Transforms the Education Process

Digital technology is transforming the education process in large and small ways, through online or "virtual" schools, online tutoring, the use of learning software by students, tests administered online, and increased technology for students to use in the classroom (e.g., "clickers" to record responses, calculators, digital cameras). Technology in education has provided students and teachers with new opportunities, but has also been soundly criticized by those who feel it is generally unnecessary and can detract from student learning.

Andrew A. Zucker's book, *Transforming Schools with Technology: How Smart Use of Digital Tools Helps Achieve Six Key Education Goals*, aligns technology with six major education goals to demonstrate how schools can use technology to meet the multiple (and ever-increasing) demands of policy makers. Those goals are to:

- increase student achievement
- make schools more engaging and relevant
- provide a high-quality education for all students
- attract, prepare, and retain high-quality teachers
- increase parental and community support for students outside of school
- require accountability for results

The book discusses the role technology plays in each goal. For example, online discussion opportunities may invite participation by students who are typically silent in classroom discussions. Online educational communities provide teachers with an additional forum for professional development and idea-sharing, and virtual schools allow students to take classes they are interested in that are not offered at their local school.

The author argues that the smart use of technology in the education process is seamless and fully meets the educational needs of the students and teachers. Technology can provide special education students, low- and high-achievers, English Language Learners, and others with the customized educational supports they need. Technology can also make it easier for teachers and school staff to perform administrative duties, freeing up more time for instruction.

In addition to discussing theories of technology implementation, the book profiles existing programs that use digital technology, focusing on 1-to-1 programs that provide one laptop for each child, and outlining new strategies for schools.

To Order: *Transforming Schools with Technology: How Smart Use of Digital Tools Helps Achieve Six Key Education Goals*, by Andrew A. Zucker (242 pages), 2008, is available for \$26.95 from Harvard Education Press, 8 Story Street, 1st Floor, Cambridge, MA 02138. Phone: 888-437-1437. Fax: 978-348-1233. It is also available from Amazon.com, www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1891792822/ref=nosim/educationalre-20/.